

Hobbies

Gulf war brings calls for commemoratives

By Roger Boye

Dozens of lawmakers are calling on the federal government to issue special coins and medals to help commemorate the victory of U.S.-led forces in the Persian Gulf war.

If every bill in Congress becomes law, the United States Mint would use millions of ounces of gold, silver and other metals to make a variety of war-related commemorative keepsakes. Among other things, the proposals would require that Uncle Sam do the following:

- Award silver national medals to all U.S. military personnel who served in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. Congress eventually could amend the proposal—which has at least 110 co-sponsors in the U.S. House—to provide for the sale of bronze duplicates to collectors, according to a legislative aide.

- Produce and offer for sale to the public commemorative silver dollars and \$10 gold pieces commemorating the allied victory, with some of the profits going to

the United Service Organizations to help U.S. soldiers and their families. Rep. William H. Zeliff Jr. (R-N.H.) introduced the legislation on March 22, and six days later, it had 87 co-sponsors in the House.

- Honor Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the military operation, and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, each with a Congressional Gold Medal. Bronze duplicates would be sold to the public.

- Produce 1991-dated silver dollars commemorating U.S. soldiers who served in the Persian Gulf war. A surcharge of \$3 per coin might help pay for some of the costs of Operation Desert Storm or for programs that benefit the troops, according to a spokesman for Sen. Steven D. Symms (R-Idaho). At least 35 of the 100 U.S. senators were co-sponsoring the silver-dollar bill on March 28.

Meanwhile, legislation calling for a circulating dollar coin to replace the \$1 Federal Reserve note made yet another debut in Congress, but with a new twist.

Under a bill introduced in early March, the coin design would honor U.S. veterans rather than commemorate the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, as called for in legislation that died when the last session of Congress ended in late 1990.

According to the new bill, which had 18 co-sponsors on March 28, the dollar coin would be gold colored and made with copper and nickel.

Yet another bill introduced recently provides for a Congressional Gold Medal depicting Eddie Rickenbacker, the World War I U.S. pilot who downed about two dozen enemy aircraft. The mint would strike bronze duplicates for sale to collectors.

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The face of Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady is depicted on a new government medal that is part of a series honoring the Treasury secretaries. To order the three-inch bronze medal, send a check for \$21 to the United States Mint, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706. Each medal also includes the date Brady took office, Sept. 15, 1988.